

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Tokio Okudara, 66, retired hog farmer and businessman

"Our neighbors mostly all were hog raisers. Being a farming district, the families were far apart because you have to have several acres to farm. So the neighbors were pretty well spread apart--but being few in number there, we used to know nearly everyone in the family; the parents, the young ones, everyone."

Tokio Okudara, Okinawan, was born on January 27, 1918, in the Hakalau district of Hawaii. His father, Kokichi, and mother, Sumi, came to the islands in the early 1900s to work on a sugar plantation.

In ca. 1920, the family moved to Kakaako, Oahu to be near Tokio's brother who required treatment at Shriner's Hospital. Later, the family moved to Kalihi Valley where they tended a hog farm.

Tokio grew up in the "Kam IV Road-Kalihi Mauka" area, played community sports, and attended Fern Elementary, Kalihi-Waena Elementary, Kalakaua Intermediate, and McKinley High Schools. After graduating in 1935, he studied at Honolulu Business College and secured a position as a bookkeeper for Honolulu Auto Parts.

He left that position in the late 1930s and subsequently entered hog raising on a full-time basis. The ownership of the family-run farm was placed in his name in 1939 and he continued farming until 1948.

Since 1957 Tokio has been involved with the management of Island Pork Producers Cooperative. Now semi-retired, Tokio is an active organizer of "Kalihi-Mauka" reunions.

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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Tokio Okudara (T0)

December 22, 1983

Manoa, Oahu

BY: Michiko Kodama (MK)

MK: This is an interview with Mr. Tokio Okudara in Manoa, Oahu, on December 22, 1983.

First of all, Mr. Okudara, when and where were you born?

T0: I was born on the Big Island, in the district of Hakalau, in 1918, January 27.

MK: What were your parents' names?

T0: My dad name was Kokichi, K-O-K-I-C-H-I, and my mother's name was Sumi, S-U-M-I.

MK: Where did they come from in Japan?

T0: They came from Okinawa in the early 1900s, I believe. The exact year, I don't know. Dad came first and he called Mother like the old-fashioned way of arranging marriage here.

MK: From what you've heard about your parents, what was their life like in Hakalau?

T0: Hakalau in those days was considered a remote district, even if it's only a few miles from Hilo. Because of the bad means of transportation, it was considered a real remote place. There weren't too many families there. They work on [sugarcane] plantation. I have no recollection of the early years, neither did I try to get through them what I experienced in those early years. But my faint recollection is [it] was really in the "sticks." You know, one house here, then one far apart. I didn't even get to remember any playmates there 'cause I don't think we actually associated in (a) social way because (our) houses (were) so far (apart).

MK: In about 1920 or 1921, your family moved to the Honolulu-Kakaako area. Can you tell me how this came about?

TO: Well, the chief reason is that my older brother got into an accident and fell down from the stairs and break his spine. They had to commit him to the Shriner's Hospital because it would be a prolonged thing. So in order to be near him, the family moved to Oahu, and we first lived back of that present Kakaako Fire Station. And in less than a year, we had to move to Cooke Street. When my older brother was in (the) Shriner's Hospital, Dad got some kind of poison to his feet and he in turn was confined in Kuakini Hospital. I don't know how many months, but it was a matter of whether he would survive or not. So those lean years, I don't know how the family ever got through. But I remember in the early days, this minister from this Kakaako Mission. I forgot his name, a Japanese. He used to come every now and then. I guess he was assisting the family in whatever way he can. So those were one of the reasons why I think we were able to get by even with the father in hospital and my brother confined in the other hospital.

MK: You know, when you folks were living in Kakaako, what do you remember about that area?

TO: Well, in Kakaako those days, the family friends, most of them were fishermen. The ones that come from Okinawa with my dad used to be fishermen back in Japan. So when they got here, the only vocation they can go into is fishing--so most of them were fishermen. And even in those days when it came to New Year, I know they all used to go visit each family, friends or relatives or whatnot. Kakaako in those days was considered a pretty rough district. It was labeled as the rough district. Even if you are pretty young, at least you can hear what they (say) [and see] the way the young boys go around in groups (or gangs stirring up nothing but trouble).

MK: What do you remember about those gangs? What do you remember hearing about those Kakaako gangs?

TO: Well, when you go and visit your friend in other district, they say, "Hey, the guys from Kakaako, they the bulls of the town, you know." (It) was labeled as the tough district there.

MK: When you were young, in that area, you attended Pohukaina School. What do you remember most about attending school?

TO: I first started in kindergarten, (at) Kakaako Mission (or) some kind of kindergarten-pre-school. I went there at the age of five and I attended first grade when I was five and a half because I was born in January. So I went pretty early. Going from kindergarten to Pohukaina, with all the classrooms and all (those buildings), you think, "Gee, (what) a big school." That's the first impression I got.

But since my (older) brother weren't in school and I was the first in the family to attend school, for me to orient myself with classroom (life), I found was little difficult (at first). There's nobody I

can come home to [and] (tell the happenings at school. Also because my parents did not speak English too good, I had to solve and adjust to school life and try to get along with fellow students. At an early age, being forced to move from one place to another, I did not have the time to form close friends, whom I could go to school with or spend time playing with. I had to transform my life to get along with a class full of new kids, and at the same time learn the school subjects.)

MK: How were the teachers there at Pohukaina?

T0: (The teachers at Pohukaina impressed me as being very patient and kind. I enjoyed my first grade class because our Oriental teacher made learning very pleasant. Though I have forgotten her name, I could still picture her face, a lovely person. Also the recess period was something that I always look forward to, because at home I had no brothers or sisters to engage in games. So school life became a new enlightening experience.)

MK: You know, in terms of your childhood activities in that area of Kakaako, what did you have?

T0: Well, as far as Kakaako, we only stayed--let's see, a little over two years. The only thing I remember(ed) was that in the back of the house we used to raise little chicken and I know I used to take care of some pigeons, and every now and then trap the pigeons, and we made soup or stew out of (them). Other than that, no, not too much went on activities. (Life was restrictive because my parents spent most of their spare time at the hospital.)

MK: I know that your father later on injured his foot, yeah? But before he did that, what was he doing for a living to support the family in Kakaako?

T0: Well, he was working for the old Lewers and Cooke Lumberyard. There used to be a lumberyard somewhere in the vicinity of (the present) Kakaako Fire Station. Then I think later on, they gave up that lumbering (job and went to [work] for a wholesale firm in the warehouse until his confinement in the hospital).

MK: I know that later on your family included many, many children, but how many children were in the family when you folks left Kakaako?

T0: When they left Kakaako, there's only three of us.

MK: Just three of you?

T0: Yeah.

MK: Then later on, how many kids came?

TO: Well, the total was thirteen. (There) was seven brothers, six sisters. But three of the brothers passed away, so then we still got ten left yet. I guess the thing is in the olden days, you know, most of these ladies that came over to be married down here, a lot of them (were very young, about seventeen or eighteen years old. Back in Okinawa as soon as a girl reach that age, they would negotiate [and] arrange marriage for their daughter and send them to Hawaii. They felt that life in Hawaii would be much better than over there so they were eager to have this kind of arrangements. These young girls unfortunately were not taught family planning because it was lacking in the Far East. Thus most of the families in the valley had eight- to twelve-member families. Without knowledge in family planning and a new lifestyle, these people, especially the women folks experienced extreme hardships.)

MK: Used to be different in the old days, yeah?

TO: (Different and difficult, with no family planning classes, homemaking courses or any government agencies to help them adapt to a new life.)

MK: When your folks moved to Kalihi, where did you folks live?

TO: When we moved to Kalihi we went directly to Kam IV Road. Into small house there. I don't know how (Dad) found out that there (was) a house (available), maybe through relative or (somebody). So we went up there about 1924, I believe.

MK: Can you first describe your house, and then describe the area near your house--your neighborhood?

TO: Well, the house was real small; only one living room and two bedroom, but when you say bedroom, (it had area of about ten feet by ten feet per room). And actually in those early years of 1924, (the neighborhood) was more like a wilderness. Nothing but trees, bushes, even the road itself was (a) street where if two cars met, one had to move on the side to let the other pass. (The main street that led to Downtown Honolulu was King Street. In order to get to King Street one have to walk over a mile and jump on a streetcar to get to Downtown. It took over an hour one way and you also paid a fare. Most person would only go for special reason, otherwise he would stay in the valley.)

MK: In the valley where you lived, who were your neighbors?

TO: Our neighbors mostly all were hog raisers. Being (a) farming district, the families were far apart because you have to have several acres to farm. So the neighbors were pretty well spread apart--but being few in number there, we used to know nearly everyone in the family; the parents, the young ones, everyone. (We knew about almost any incidents or happenings that occurred in the valley.)

(Also the isseis had formed a community association [Kalihi Mauka

Chihōjin Kai].) Most activities were carried (out by) the association, like (presiding over the funeral services; hold New Year's party Japanese style. Also on New Year's Day the isseis would pay a visit to each family in the neighborhood wishing everyone good luck in the coming new year and thanking everyone for the help and favors rendered during the past year.)

Then because of the remote(ness of the) area, the association used to bring (shows--movies. They) hire(d an) operator to bring some Japanese shows up there, about four or five times a year. (Most of the people, especially the ladies, burdened with farm and housework, could not find time to go to movies. It was indeed a treat and joy to these people to attend these shows, old Japanese movies, which help them recall life back in Japan. Everyone would anxiously await these evenings. Thanks to the community association for happy evenings.) That was a treat for them.

MK: But where did they set it up, though?

TO: Oh, there was a opening next to (a) house, (which), of course, had little tall grass, but still then everybody used to bring goza, reserve a certain place for their family. It was good.

MK: How about like weddings, picnics?

TO: Well, they used to have a picnic (for) the whole community. Oh, I think a couple of times, I believe. But since most of the people were farmers, raising hogs, they couldn't pretty well take off, because (they) had to feed the animals daily. So the longest they can stay away from the farm is two, two-and-a-half hours. So it wasn't an all-day affair. But still then, to them it's a treat when you mention picnic 'cause it's an added activity besides just waking up, working on the farm until sundown and go to sleep.

(Although it was a once a year event, the younger ones enjoyed the day most, spending time at the beach and especially participating in competitive races and winning prizes. Prizes which could be used mostly for school. A big winner would take home a six months' supplies of his school needs. That was a substantial savings for a family, moneywise.)

MK: How about weddings?

TO: Well, weddings during our years, 1930s, '20s I mean, there weren't too much weddings because the children of (those years)--the oldest, I believe was just about seventeen or eighteen, the rest were all young(er. I was about nine years old and the elder youths were about sixteen; so there were not too many marriages. The few marriages that occurred were those few arranged marriages, where the bride came from Japan or Okinawa to find her man here.)

MK: In that area where you lived, Kam IV Road area, what kinds of people

other than Japanese lived there, if any?

T0: (The residents of upper Kam IV Road were mostly Japanese with about two Hawaiian families and about four Chinese families.)

MK: You know those taro patches you once mentioned, how were those run, and by what types of people?

T0: Well, that Chinese people (toiled) the whole area (of taro patches which started up in the valley to almost Kalihi Union Church). I didn't see any of them living there. I think they must have lived somewhere else; come daily, tend the (taro) patches, harvest the thing and went home. But it's a huge district because it extends almost over a mile. (They install the irrigation system, diverting Kalihi Stream water about two miles deep up the valley and flow the water down a distance of three miles.) How they dig the ditches and get the water down to there (was) really marvelous.

MK: You mentioned irrigation ditch. For the families living in that Kam IV Road area, how was the water and the sewage and electricity up there during your time when you remember?

T0: We had electricity. Water was available. Each house had their own cesspool. They didn't have any of the present plumbing system where you connect to the county lines. So each house had their own cesspool. But the first year when I (moved there), we didn't have a cesspool. All (they) dug (was) a hole, set a shack on top (of it and) that was the toilet, the "outhouse," that's what they called it then.

MK: How about the water, by then there was pipe water coming in?

T0: There was water, yeah. County lines was in there.

MK: How about business, any stores or anything in that area?

T0: No. The nearest stores way down King Street. So the practice was that some Japanese stores in town, maybe Kalihi or that nearby district, they used to send up a man, go and, you know, check on each family and (see if they) need anything. They'll give him the order, and he in turn either come back in afternoon or early in the next day; deliver the whatever necessities, yeah. He comes in about at least once a week.

MK: In those days, what were some of the names of the stores that used to send order takers up?

T0: (U. Yamane Store was the most prominent and largest store of the district in those days. It was located at the present Kalihi Foodland Market site. That land is owned by the Yamane family. The store carried a complete line of family needs, even animal feed.)

(Also another store from the Palama district had a man to service the families. He was their friend.) They used to call him, "Chūmon-tori." He used to take the order, go (back to the store, make the orders, and deliver the merchandise). You either can pay cash or (charge it). But I don't know, sometime they (had) hard time collecting, too. You know how humans are. If they can extend their credit, they'll try (to) extend it.

Back in those days, just like the old plantation stores, you know, you go and buy, charge, [and] end of the month or beginning of the month, you pay them. But it was convenient 'cause most of the families didn't have (cars to go shopping). Whatever (car they had was trucks that was used on the farm. Also) the mothers in those days didn't drive. (Having a salesperson to come and take orders and deliver their family needs was a convenient service that worked out well for the mothers.)

MK: Since most of the people up there were farming, what kinds of things did the farmers grow for their own family support?

TO: (Most of the families were engaged in hog raising, with a few who grew flowers to supply the florist shops in town. During the spare time each family had a plot, where they grew their own family needs like lettuce, green onion, turnips and other leaf vegetables. Bananas grew wild. Mangoes was everywhere, papayas was abundant and citrus fruits crop was plentiful. Any abundance of one kind was bartered for the neighbors' extras.)

MK: I know that your family was in hog raising, so if you have to kind of explain to me how it was done, choose one day's activities early in the morning till late at night. Can you describe to me what it was like being on a hog farm?

TO: Well, when we went into the hog farm, it wasn't something you started big. Dad used to work part time as the stevedore. We started with about five sows, the mother pig. Then as the herd increase then we (went) full time. Then when it came about (1936), after I got out of high school, it was pretty good size. So I, in turn, stayed home and helped him.

But the daily work schedule for hog farmer would be to get up, say, about four o'clock in the morning, make the rounds and collect all the kitchen waste, so by the time you got home, (it) would be about nine or nine-thirty [in the morning]. So in the meantime, if Mother start feeding the hogs, we would jump in and help her. Then we would have to dump the thing [i.e., kitchen waste] in a cooker and cook the thing for the next day. But in order to cook that thing, we used to use lumber--old scrap lumber. That's why we kept looking around for old house to be demolished.

As soon as we see somebody tearing down the house, we used to go there and say, "Hey, can we take the firewood?"

A lot of them gladly say, "Okay, haul them away." So we go and get whatever (we) can and have a huge pile that should last about maybe three to four months. Now they use oil to cook the swill. But back in those days, wood was the only source of energy.

So if there weren't any old houses torn down, and if we (are) running low on the pile of lumber, we used to go and find kiawe wood. (We had) to cut the kiawe wood, at least good size, about three or four feet, and we have to (chop) them smaller. Otherwise it's hard to get started, you know. So with the big chisel and sledgehammer, we used to pound them and break them (into sizes that would catch and start the fire faster.) That's added work.

The daily one is you feed (the hogs) in the morning and you feed them in the night. So in between you have to cook the swill. Then everyday we (had) to wash the pens. Now if you (are) in the business of marketing your own hogs, you have to deliver (the hogs) to the slaughterhouse, have it dressed, then deliver the carcass to the market. So for two to do (all) that, it's a full-time job. So we go from four-thirty in the morning to five-thirty, six o'clock (in the afternoon). Now if you go and haul lumber for firewood, that's non-stop. You start in the morning, go right up to the evening.

And, you know, you don't say you work six days, the animals gotta be fed seven days. It's a year-round thing. So in order to go strictly into full-time hog raising, you have to have so many heads of hogs to make [it] worthwhile--to earn enough, (the equivalent of two men wages). When the number of (hogs) count goes to 500 heads at least, you have to have two persons on the farm full time.

MK: You were graduated from high school in 1935, yeah? And then you did a little work outside, then you came back to the farm full time. By that time, your family had 500 head?

T0: Yeah, we had 500. Little more than that I believe.

MK: How big was the area of land that your family leased?

T0: That area used to be little over an acre, about acre and a half--yeah.

MK: In those days when you were really young, where did the different hog farming families lease their lands from?

T0: I'm not too sure who and who, but I knew Campbell had pretty big area there. The Magoon Estate, the Mendonca--I think those were the three principal landlords there. I don't know if Bishop [Estate] had any up there.

MK: Earlier--you mentioned that like your dad was working part time as a stevedore and part time working on the farm--when was it when he made the switch to be full-time farmer?

T0: I think about 1931. Up to '30 I think, he used to go part time working at stevedore.

MK: So during, say--crash was 1929, yeah? Then you had depression years. How was it for your family being dependent on the hog farming?

T0: Well, as far as the family needs, food was at least coming off the land. On the side, I used to raise chickens. So chicken and eggs was available. In the back, we had papaya and banana, and we made a plot of vegetable garden. The meat, if we need any, used to come from the hog farming. So, as far as food, wasn't that bad. And being in that remote area, the lease was real cheap. So other than the cash needs to send the children to school, it wasn't too bad.

(It's) like, you know, when you stay in Downtown--everything (had) to be bought. But even in those years, those who used to live in town didn't even buy papaya now, you know. If somebody had a papaya tree, whatever they could not consume, they used to go and give (to friends). When it came, say, about 1930, late '30s or '40s, I didn't believe in paying for papaya or banana, because all this time we (were getting) it free; the eggplant or mustard cabbage, everything. (Whatever your friend had, he shared with friends.) So for us to go and pay so many cents a pound for banana or papaya or eggplant, [I] felt, "Gee, it's wasting our money." Oshii--that's what they call in Japanese, yeah. I still think, "Hey, all this time we get it free, why should I go and buy now." But then, it dawned on you (that it is no longer the good old days; now,) everything gotta be purchased. That's how it came.

In 1931, '32, '33, you know, that's when the hard years. This produce man, whatnot, they used to make their rounds, hitting the remote areas of Honolulu. The sack of head cabbage we used to buy for fifty cents. We used to split [it] among three or four families, so for a couple weeks we ate nothing but head cabbage. And they used to bring this kind akule, small bag, I don't know how much, I think about less than a dollar. We used to dry them up. What they couldn't sell and get rid of in town, they used to go out and try to peddle in the outskirts of town. That's why was really cheap.

MK: I guess in the old days, there used to be a lot of giving and taking among friends and neighbors?

T0: Oh, yeah. Because in the old days, the whole community you knew them. Pretty close--whatever get left they used to just give.

MK: In the early days when you were a young kid, you were going to school, like third, fourth grades you went to Fern School. I see Fern School on Middle Street now days, but what did Fern School look like back then, the buildings and everything?

T0: Fern School used to be only that structure. It was formed just like a "I," two wings plus the main corridor. I don't know, I think had

less than twenty rooms. That was Fern School in the early years. So with the Kalihi district, especially like Shafter, Kam IV Road district, the population start increasing. Fern couldn't accommodate all the enrollment so they had to go to Kalihi Japanese[-language] school [Kalihi Nihon Go Gakkō], and made arrangements to at least use one classroom. The grade that went [there] was the fifth grade, you know. I don't know why I got selected, but I was told to go to Kalihi Japanese school to attend the English class for the fifth grade.

MK: That Kalihi Japanese-language school, how far was it from Fern School?

TO: From Fern School, I would say about a quarter mile, yeah.

MK: What do you remember most about your days at Fern and Kalihi Japanese schools for English studies?

TO: One of the things I remember is that if you go to school, you have to attain certain grade level to be promoted to a next grade. Otherwise you would stay back, you know, the same grade until you hit that grade level. So I know some of them, they stay back two years. They didn't just go automatically promoted to a next grade.

MK: Was there some sort of test that they gave you or grading?

TO: Uh, grading--the teacher grade. [If] the teacher felt that you were not capable of doing third grade work, you stayed in second grade for another year. So I know some of them, when they were graduates, six[th] grade elementary school--six[th] grade, they must have been about thirteen or fourteen [years old], maybe fifteen I think, 'cause I look at them [and] they were so big, you know.

MK: In those days how were the teachers at that Fern School?

TO: Well, I think those days the teachers were much stricter. In the last thirty or forty years, the relation between the teacher and the student, I figure, must have come a little more relax. And respect for the teachers somehow seem to be lacking, I think. Like I used to go Japanese[-language] school, I see the difference. In Japanese[-language] school they used to have this custom that they respect the ones in authority, their elders or their teachers; and they stress that. So when you went to Japanese[-language] school, you had to behave in that (manner).

Even in English school where the principal was the disciplinarian, strict one, everybody used to be more or less, not that rowdy. I know they used to whip you with a belt. I don't think they tolerate that nowadays, but back in those days they used to be real strict so you know there was some fear within the students. I don't know if that's good or not good, but that might help the kids from early age to respect authority. But now I don't know.

MK: I know that after you went to Fern and English classes at Kalihi Japanese[-language] School, you went to Kalihi-Waena. Why is that you had to go to sixth grade to Kalihi-Waena?

TO: Well, as I was saying, Fern lack in classrooms. There wasn't sufficient classroom, because they didn't keep adding any classroom. I guess because of the time being so hard the government couldn't appropriate money to build additional classroom. So they felt that Kalihi-Waena had one classroom which could be squeeze for another. The ones who were going to six[th] grade, some of them had to go to Kalihi-Waena because Fern School, one classroom cannot take care of the six[th] grade. So some were moved over to Kalihi-Waena.

MK: I know that like Kalihi-Waena is now on Gulick Avenue, and I was wondering, how did you folks go to Kalihi-Waena?

TO: Kalihi-Waena? Well, there was no road directly from Kam IV to Gulick at that time, so we have to make our own path to go to Kalihi-Waena. Go through bushes, cross the stream, jump over, then go to Kalihi-Waena, yeah. 'Cause there weren't any School Street or anything in those days. If we had to walk all the way on the street, we have to go down Kam IV Road, hit King Street, then go up Gulick, but that's too far, you know, a route. So we somehow made path go through to Kalihi-Waena, going through taro patch there. Then we used to cross that Kalihi Stream and go up.

MK: I know that right now Kalihi-Waena has some kind of modern buildings, but back then what did Kalihi-Waena have for buildings, for the kids?

TO: Well, Kalihi-Waena had in those days one main building, with office; and upper classes used to stay within [that main building]. Then the other classes were in the bungalows. Each individual class is one small building back in old days. And the Kalihi-Waena main building used to get those, not modern tiles now--that old block of stone, Hawaiian kind. Used to be like the old judiciary building and whatnot. Yeah, built with that. It was a two-story structure, but to us, it look like an institution 'cause you don't see too much of the stone buildings. So going from Fern which was, you know, made of wood, to Kalihi-Waena, I felt little big because, hey, going to a stone building. Yeah.

MK: And like when you folks went to Kalihi-Waena, you were with kids from different neighborhoods, right?

TO: Yeah, I don't know who else went besides me, but I know in my class from Kam IV area, I was the only one there. So for me to attend six[th] grade, I start all over again to make new friends; and then, you know, each district had their way they behave and all that. So I had to adjust myself again. Yeah, so looks like I'm continuously trying to change my lifestyle, trying to see how I can cope with the (problems).

MK: So you were saying that when you went to Kalihi-Waena you had to readjust?

T0: Yeah, readjust.

MK: And when you went to Kalihi-Waena, what type of students were attending class with you?

T0: Kalihi-Waena, I used to be always, in my classroom the youngest, because I (went) about six months early in school. So I used to be more or less the small [one] in stature. I know back in those days, when I said six[th] grade, you're talking about some of them close to fifteen years old, see.

The teachers there were mostly local graduates, so it wasn't too bad, you know. You can more or less understand them a little more. But within classroom itself, as far as the Japanese count, was in a minority. Mostly Hawaiian, Portuguese, some Chinese. Whereas in Fern School, a majority of them used to come from Kam IV so it was more predominantly Japanese, see. So that's where some adjustment had to made, you know.

MK: Those days when you folks were all kids at school, what kind of games did you folks play or do together at Kalihi-Waena?

T0: Well, you used to have in the lower grades, boy, girl with the teacher telling you how to play. But when you start hitting fifth grade, sixth grade, the boys used to more or less play football, just sandlot football, and play baseball. Not too much of other activities.

MK: Later on, you went to seventh, eighth, ninth grade--Kalakaua [Intermediate School]. How was it going to Kalakaua? Probably another readjustment for you?

T0: Well, Kalakaua by then, at least you pretty much matured, and here you get this three different schools, so more or less you were able to cope with that. Only thing is that Kalakaua is assembling of all the different elementary school from Liliha up to all of West Oahu now, from Ewa, Waipahu, Aiea. So well, you can more or less distinguish the so-called country boys with the Downtown boys by their behavior.

MK: What was different?

T0: Well, the boys that lived in town used to act like--I don't know how you'd describe--they think they're better than the country boys 'cause the country boys more or less have a tendency to speak more in parent's dialect, you know with a accent and all that. They [i.e., country boys] more or less, the way they dress is a little more conservative, whereas the Downtown boys like to dress up. And they used to keep with the style, whereas the youths from the country

used to dress more conservatively, strictly. I guess the parents themselves used to buy the clothes for them, and they in turn just wear whatever the parents buy. Whereas the boys in town used to go and buy their own. So they keep up with the style. And those students from the rural area used to come as a carpool. One guy had a car and the rest, maybe five or six come together, and they share; or they pay the driver so much per month. Those who couldn't afford to pay for the transportation usually went on to work for the plantation, even at that age. So Kalakaua, you know, takes whole West Oahu area.

MK: Then for the Kam IV Road boys, where did you folks fit in, between the country boys and the town boys?

T0: Well, we weren't actually town boys because we lived in the sticks. But we weren't, you know, behaving like the country boys 'cause we used to go in town and have some taste of what city people behave like. So I think we're in the middle, where we can adjust both ways, see.

But, you know, from Kam IV Road to go to Kalakaua, that's over two miles. And every day, you have to commute back and forth, that's all the way you gotta walk now. About the mid '34 or '33, I think School Street came in, so not too bad. So you can just go on School Street, walk down Gulick [Avenue], go all the way to Kalakaua.

But the problem is that Kalihi Valley usually rains, you know. It rains right and comes down to just where School Street is. After that, no rain. So rather than carry umbrella or raincoat or anything, we 'd rather get wet. And by the time (we) walk from School Street to Kalakaua, it dries off. So that's what we used to do, yeah.

You know, every time when it rains, that's how it [was] unless it's a real heavy downpour then, you know, covers the whole city. But, you know, Kalihi Valley is just only mountain showers they call it. [It] comes down to School Street and it dries off. So I didn't carry any raincoat or anything.

MK: Then in those days when you were going to Kalakaua, did you folks ever go into the Kalihi town area, to like get something to eat or fool around?

T0: On the way to school, we don't have no money, so we didn't spend money on any candies or anything. When we started in the morning, go Kalakaua, and after Kalakaua went to Kalihi Japanese[-language] School, so it was a full day school. Then, you know, [as] soon as you finish English school, you go to Japanese[-language] school, so there's no time to fool around. I know in between Japanese and English class, we used to gather on the Japanese[-language] School playground and we used to play touch football or baseball, whatever you know, during the season of football or baseball. Other than that, no.

MK: I think once or twice I heard about the Japanese schoolboys playing hooky from Japanese-language school. Could you tell me about that story?

TO: Oh well, you know, Kalakaua school period they used to have football competition among the different intermediate school. They used to have a league. That league itself was pretty well organized. The caliber of playing was pretty good, see. So they used to have that every once or twice a week I think after Kalakaua's [school day] over.

So most of the boys, rather than go to Japanese[-language] school, went to the football game. That was [at] the old Honolulu Stadium down Moiliili. We used to jump on the streetcar and go, and sometime we didn't even pay because what they used to do is get on the back, and when the conductor came to collect, jump off and go in the front. That's how they cheat, you know, just to save the carfare or they didn't have carfares, a lot of them. They used to jump off, catch the next one, until the conductor came to collect, jump off again, keep going like that until they reach the stadium, yeah.

But, you know, a lot of them--we used to go Japanese[-language] school, skip class and then go over to football game. Somehow the principal found out, you know. All these boys, usually boys are missing. The girls were more diligent and they used to go. And you know, when you get from a class, (say maybe) about six, seven or even ten missing, he's gonna question, yeah. Somehow he found out. So he used to line everybody against the wall. He know where everybody went, so he just went down the line slapping everybody on the head, yelling out, "Hey, you folks, your parents paying the tuition, and here you (guys are) wasting all that to go to football game. There's no excuse." That school principal used to be one real Japanese master. Yeah. He used to go right down the line.

Not only that, mostly it was guys from the valley, you know. 'Cause the other students, boys, their fathers used to be the Japanese[-language] school association officials, see. So they more or less was right on top of the kids--make sure [the boys] don't go play tardy and all kinds. So they used to attend class pretty regularly. Whereas the boys in the valley, well, their parents too busy, couldn't take time out to check up on the boys, so [those boys] used to run off to go to football games.

So the principal felt that [he] had to go report to their parents, see. Every now and then he goes off and reports to the parents what went on in the school classes and everything.

And football season came, he had to go up and tell them, "Hey, your kids playing hooky." So a lot of these boys when they see his car coming up they go right up in a tree and start throwing pebbles and everything. Not to hit him but just to intimidate him. Then when he park his car to go in and make his rounds with the parents, they used to flat his tire. Yeah. He know it was Kam IV boys, but he

couldn't point which individual, see. So next day, line up and he come out and say, "I know who, but I cannot name so you gotta clean the room," or do something. Oh yeah--he used to really say [that] those boys up there are not good; they going turn out to be real problems, see?

MK: You mentioned there were football teams among the intermediate schools. What was the name of the Kalakaua football team?

TO: Kalakaua Monarchs, I think. But in those days, the intermediate school only had within the Honolulu district, you know. You didn't have outlying kinds. You had Kalakaua, Central, Liliuokalani (?), Washington, and Kawanakoa, I think. And so they had pretty good league. Only thing, they are smaller in size compared to the high school boys. But they're fully equipped and everything. They used to get big gathering right in the afternoon.

MK: Like later on, when you went to McKinley [High School], what do you remember about your going to McKinley?

TO: Well, McKinley, as I mentioned, in those days in order to go up another grade you have to get a certain grade [point]. To go to McKinley, you have to be within a certain scholastic levels. So when they said, "Oh, you're accepted," it made me real happy, you know, 'cause it's a time of decision. If you cannot go to high school, you gotta start going to work or do something, see. So when it says you're accepted, then all right. McKinley itself was the only public school in Honolulu at that time. So it took from all Oahu.

And in order for me to get to McKinley, I had to walk from Kalihi Valley, go to King Street, catch the streetcar and go to McKinley all the way down. That's little over an hour, you know. Even if you walk, that's about half an hour to hit King Street. And the streetcar itself just crawls, I think about five miles an hour. You can just run and hop on them.

Even at that time McKinley used to be majority Japanese students. That's why they used to call it "Tokyo High" in those days. Gee, if get one haole wahine walking around, everybody turn around. Everybody know her name--the whole school know her name, 'cause, you know, (they were) few in number; you can just count.

In those days McKinley, as far as football is concerned, used to go on a trip to the Mainland. A lot of them [students] played only during the football season, drop out of school, come back the next year, so that they can make the trip again. Some of them reach the age of twenty or twenty-one, 'cause when they first hit high school, they about fifteen, sixteen. Instead of finishing within three years, they drop out, come back. By the time they actually graduate, was about twenty or twenty-one.

Roosevelt didn't come in for a while. I think about 1934, '33. So

McKinley itself was the only one. I think enrollment was about 3,000 in those days.

MK: Like what kind of activities other than football was there?

T0: When you go to high school then, you more or less have a taste of what college, or this higher academic thing was, because you start getting sports activity, then you have different organizations among the students, you know. Then beside that, you got the social dancing going on and all. You get all this kind of oratorical contests. So actually you really find out what schooling is about when you hit high school level.

You start thinking, hey, what I going do after high school, see? So you kind of try to pick the subjects which are gonna prepare you. You hit the age when you know, hey, the time for fooling around is over; you know somehow you gotta start planning for the future after high school. So you gotta prepare. When you get all this other activity, like joining a club and see how the club organize, and what the responsibility of being officer and all these things, you know, a bit of taste of what after school life would be.

MK: Like for you, when you were in high school, what were you thinking about the future?

T0: Well, when I was in high school since I was farming, I took up agriculture. With the intention that, if I going into agriculture business, I gotta get an agricultural background, plus some business training so that I can more or less run a business, see. So I was in Future Farmers of America, and try to ready myself in the farming life.

MK: You mentioned social dancing. I know you once told the story of how issei parents felt toward that. How about your time when you were at McKinley, what was the reaction to things like that?

T0: Well, I know as far as the parents, for the boys to attend social dancing was all right, but to have the daughter, they weren't too warm about that, you know. They themselves looked upon social dancing as a little, you know, too intimate because you embrace and whatnot. But I guess if you have an older brother or older sister who attended those functions, it would have been little easier. I know being the first girl of the family was pretty hard for some of them. The parents couldn't see themselves permitting the daughter to engage in that kind of function, see. So to break the ice took quite a while.

MK: How about in your own family, like you're one of the older boys, but I know you have younger brothers and sisters. What was it like for them as they were growing up?

T0: Well, the one below me, she didn't care to go too much, but the one

below her, yeah. She wanted to go so she used to sneak and go. She used to go afternoon school dances, but nighttime, no. Unless she says, "Oh, Ma--get graduation function." But they [i.e., parents] didn't want to accept it outright and say, "Okay." That's the Oriental way, I guess.

MK: When you were at McKinley, you were taking agriculture and you were kinda preparing yourself for the business end of farming, too, yeah. I know that after that, you went to Honolulu Business College, but how come you decided to go Honolulu Business College instead of just going into farming after you graduated?

TO: Well, like even in farming I could have started work early in the morning and make enough time to go to school and come back in the afternoon and do part of the work. That's why I figure attend the business school there. Because my parents didn't have any business training, I figure I should have some knowledge of it so that it might come in handy, if I should take over the thing, see.

MK: Since your parents didn't have that business training, how did they do the business end of the farming then in those days?

TO: The business end is mostly taken care of by cheap labor and long hours. Well, you can tell if you sell one dollar, your expense gotta be so many cents less to survive, see. But more than that, I think it's the long hours that they put in to do things nearly everything by themselves [that] kept the cost of farming down, see. But still then you have to have a certain volume, to feed ten kids now, see. That's the thing, see. If most of the food comes off the land itself, the major living expense are taken care of because food comprised the chief expense of family. And if the lease is cheap enough, as long as you get enough to give the kids school expense and clothing, that will stretch the whole thing.

MK: You know, I was wondering--by the time you were graduated from McKinley in 1935, about how many families were farming hogs up in Kam IV Road?

TO: Kam IV Road--I think less than forty.

MK: Less than forty? How about later, after that?

TO: Later, you know, 1940s, I think nearly every available space in the valley was occupied. At that time I think had close to ninety.

MK: All of them were about an acre in . . .

TO: Some had a little more, some had about two acres. But on the average, been an acre, acre and a half. 'Cause in order to do hog farming you have to have at least an acre because you have to have the acreage to wash down the pen and send the flow out. You send one section, that thing drains, get dried, and you cannot keep flowing

the waste to a certain section alone because it cannot absorb that fast, you know. Whatever flows out they used to plant this honohono grass, cut that and feed that to the animals, see. So that's how you recycle the waste; get the grass and feed them. That in turn controls the growth of weed and whatnot. Of course, it might have smelled there, but we were far away so it doesn't bother those Downtown.

MK: That was efficient, yeah? Use of space and resources.

T0: It prevents the tall weed and what other grass from growing there, eh?

MK: I know that after you went to the Honolulu Business College, you worked a little over a year as a bookkeeper for Honolulu Auto Parts. Why did you do that?

T0: I used to wake up early and help the parents in the morning. I felt that if I go and work outside, supplement the farm income, would help them. So I went work. But in those days, when you go out and work, the medium income was about twenty-five dollars, thirty dollars, thirty-five dollars, forty dollars. If you getting paid about sixty dollars, oh boy, that's some payments!

But even if thirty dollars or thirty-five dollars, that additional income would have help. Good because bread used to be about ten cents, I think, those days. Yeah. You know, the dollar used to stretch quite a bit. 'Cause I could have gone out nighttime with a dollar, come home with change after you go movie, and go eat someplace, or eat saimin. Yeah. Come home with the change. So, you know, even if you get paid thirty-five dollars, there was no withholding tax or anything like that, and social security didn't come in until 1935, I believe, or '36. So there is no deductions so the net comes home. So you give the parents, and they in turn give you allowance, [but even that] I used to take lunch instead of go and buy lunch.

But, you know, the time came when I had to decide whether I should stay home, be full time. But luckily, you know, we had business, dealing with the Oahu Sugar Plantation Store to supply them the carcass, see. So they had enough volume for us to supply them. I figure while my father carried on the farmwork, I can go do the selling of the carcass. 'Cause from Kalihi to Waipahu, it's a long run when you have to go through that old Moanalua Road. They didn't have any freeway so I go haul that thing, have it slaughtered, take it down, deliver, and come back. And I come back about noon and help finish up the farm work. But because we can sell directly to the market, at least we have a better return than go through another wholesaler and selling like that, see.

MK: I was wondering--by '38 or '39, you already were sort of taking over the family operation, yeah? And then '39 you said they changed it over to your name. How come they did that?

T0: Well, I guess my dad experienced something during the First World War, or heard some other stories that, if in case Japan and U.S. should go into war, maybe the government might cause some hardship with alien businesses. So he figure since I'm coming of age, too, and I do most of the business transaction with the markets and whatnot, he change it over to my name. I used to do most of the business end of the deals so I think sooner or later it gonna happen so might as well change it over. So we change it over.

MK: You took over in '39; and you mentioned that just prior to World War II coming, you folks bid for some military kitchen waste. Can you explain how that worked?

T0: Well, you know just before the war, I guess the U.S. was getting prepared in case it does happen. So a lot of personnel start coming to Hawaii, get stationed here, and almost every open area used to get military camp. And they gotta feed the personnel, so after they feed, you get some waste coming off. At the beginning, whoever want to collect, collect.

But they had so many guys trying to collect the military kitchen waste, rather than going from house to house. If you go house to house, you gotta put in three, might be four hours, whereas if you go to a military kitchen, you can get almost a truckload just by one stop. So since too many people going down there try to pick up, they decided the best way is to make them put up a bid to see who might want to buy that, you know. So that's the control there. And whoever is successful have the contract for the year, and then at the following year you bid again. So it became a competitive thing. And the price start going up, too. We paying for waste; that's the only way they can control, I guess.

MK: How about before when you already had restaurants in town and everything, did you folks have to bid for the restaurant's waste?

T0: No, restaurant usually--if you knew the owner you just pay them a nominal sum, and he in turn would be more satisfied if you haul it away. Keep the place clean, see. And being friends, at least he is satisfied with whatever you offer. But military and naval installation, most farmers felt that the quality of swill was pretty good, so they started bidding much higher.

MK: So that was the first time that the hog farmers had to go out and bid then?

T0: Well, Schofield used to have that from pretty far back. So the rest of the service start: "Hey, why don't we do that." I guess they caught on by the Schofield method of doing that.

MK: You said during World War II when 442 was coming up you couldn't go because of agricultural deferment. Can you explain?

TO: Well, actually when the call for volunteer came up, I think they had more than what they expect, you know. They were trying to get only 4,000 or something and the response was over 10,000. So I guess they break the different categories down. So like us, since we hauling away the garbage and doing military business, they gave the other volunteers first preference.

MK: And you know during the war years, I was wondering how it affected the Kam IV Road people. Can you kind of tell me how martial law affected the lifestyle, the routines of the people up in the Kam IV Road area?

TO: Well, during the war, in the Kam IV area since it was an isolated place and the boys more or less were spending the evenings up in the valley, everyone didn't have cars. You might have one out of five. So some used to go in town. Maybe hit the bar or something. The rest used to stay home.

When you say stay home, it's on the bridge. It's on the bridge--Kam IV Bridge; that's where the nights were spent. Blackout and whatnot. As soon as the war start--everybody confined themselves to home because they are afraid to get out. Then the evenings became a little more relaxed. They used to spend evening at the bridge; a game of a little shooting crap or whatnot. If one car came out or two cars came out, they all jumped on and went Downtown. But some hit the bar or go eat saimin, came home.

But you know, in those days, you didn't have what they call television. Even radio itself; only a certain family had, you know. Radio, you couldn't buy for nineteen dollars, twenty dollars now and that used to cost money. So we just hope that, that person who had a radio would say, "Hey, come over, play card or listen to it." For us, that was a real trip, you know. When I bought a radio I used to turn them on almost every night, listen to it, fall asleep; that thing still going on in the morning.

MK: In those days, what were the popular programs that you folks enjoyed listening to?

TO: Well, I know the top used to be "Hawaii Calls," yeah. Then we used to get Jack Benny program, and who's the other fella--all this comical, and mostly the Hawaiian musical.

MK: You mentioned the bridge a little while ago. Can you kind of explain what the bridge was, for the Kam IV gang?

TO: Well, that's more or less the focal point of the valley 'cause it's almost situated in the middle of the valley--when I say valley, I mean the west side of the valley. So the ones who lived down used to come walk up, and the ones used to live up, walk down to get together and talk stories and whatnot. And it's a wooden bridge, you know, old wooden bridge, with only one lane. Only one car can pass.

And the thing is the old bridge, before they build another one, used to come straight down, and there's a creek; a small creek that flows under the road, see. But in order to continue on down the road you have to make a sharp turn. Just like a S-turn; so those who not familiar with the road didn't realize they had to make a sharp turn, [and] they would plow right into the creek there, you know. Yeah. Right in there. Because we didn't have any street lights there, only way after the late '30s I think the street light came on. So guys used to come--voomph, right in there. You stay home and hear bang--you know, there's another one went in. If you going up, not too bad because they can see the bridge. But you coming down without any light and they not familiar, they used to hit that, yeah.

MK: How about during the war years, did the guys go to the place called, "The Barn?"

TO: Well, the Barn is right next to the street, see, nearby. We used to stay on the bridge. Now if it start raining, they used to go and seek shelter in there. So every night either they playing cards, with a flashlight, or shooting craps, so the parent used to say, "Don't go and play with those boys on the bridge because they no good." In the old days, anybody who gambled or played cards, they labeled them as delinquents, you know. So they told them stay away. Yeah. But every night regardless of rain or what, (the group) used to (be) about ten or twelve every night. (They were) about three, two or three years older than I am. (They were) the first wave of youths, eh?

MK: Then during the war, since there were a lot of young men of draftable age--how was it in the valley? Did many of them go off to war?

TO: Well, most of them--our age had deferment because of the agricultural status, but the ones you know, younger than that, as they hit the age, they all went. But that football team when we first started playing, we had pretty good crop. Then when some of them got drafted, the Farrington gang start coming along. So we were able to continue for five years, you know, winning championship.

MK: What was that name of that team you were a member of--football team?

TO: Kalihi Valley, Kalihi Valley AC. Actually it's Kam IV, but we couldn't label ourselves Kam IV, you know. You have to more or less designate as Kalihi Valley because we (were) in the valley, eh? But later on, I think as soon as (one) mention Kam IV they put that together as Kalihi Valley, see.

MK: And you know that team, how did it start?

TO: Well, we had some [team], one or two earlier than us that used to go down at Kalihi-Waena [School] and play. But our period came. Akira [Sakima] was playing one year, down Kalihi-Waena, see. So the following year I followed him. And then we played one year and then

team folded up because there was no sponsor or no person to hustle. Then after that, since the war start coming, they disbanded. Then those at Fern Park call me, come play for them. So I went to play for them. And then we got several others from Kam IV to start playing. Then for two or three seasons we played at Fern Park under this other team sponsor.

Then with the nucleus of Kam IV boys, we discussed it; hey, let's start forming our own team. We had about six or seven that been playing for about three years already. That's how the football team got started. But previous to that we had these young kids from Farrington [High School] who were interested in joining some organized league, playing baseball, see. And this fellow, Arakaki--Pluto [Arakaki] said, "Okay, go form a team." And he buys the ball and bat, and the T-shirt. So they got started. And they went to play for this City-Wide novice baseball league.

The first year, the team from Kalihi (entered a) official league, they captured the (baseball) championship. (A team with no proper baseball diamond to practice on that used a small grassy clearing as their training grounds, was still able to capture a championship. This accomplishment ignited the desire to form their own football team since the Fern Park team disbanded. We) had enough (boys)--seven or eight (experienced players plus) enough of the younger ones willing to join up, so that's how we started [the football team].

(We started) playing in '42. We (joined) as Kalihi Valley [AC] team in the City-Wide 130-pound barefoot football league. We won the western division (that year). The City-Wide league had two divisions, west and east. Playing (for the) first time in (this) league and we captured the (western) division. Oh boy! Then we played for the league championship--(but) lost to Diamond Packers who were the defending champions by a score I think of 7 to 0, by one touchdown. So everybody felt, gee, not too bad for (the) first year, winning division champ and giving (those) perennial champs a good battle.

END OF SIDE TWO

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MK: Continue: so during the second year . . .

TO: (The) second year, we finish as western division runner-up. That was the start of the rebuilding, because some boys left for the war. Then in 1944, we captured the league title in 130-pound football league. We defeated the Diamond Packers which were the champs for three years. For five consecutive years, we took the champ but the amazing thing is that with the going out of the players to war and bringing in new boys to rebuild, we keep on winning the championship for the five years with new material and all that.

I figure, well, here's part of history because from now on I don't think we'll have any barefoot league because most of the parents right now send the boys to join either midget or pony league, fully clothed now--fully uniformed. I haven't seen any barefoot league for many years already.

MK: About when was the last time you heard of the barefoot league?

T0: I think after '49, I think that was about the last. 'Cause after '48, there was another league going on. I think Chinen AC or somebody won the championship. After that, they didn't have any because everybody start playing, you know, (in) fully (uniformed), fully equipped leagues. And for (a) team to go forty-five games without a defeat--we had a couple of ties--for a stretch of almost six years, undefeated, is truly an amazing record. So I think without any barefoot football league coming on, this is going to remain as part of history.

MK: Then I think I read somewhere that you folks' team also had members coming from the Windward side?

T0: Yeah. We had boys come from Kahaluu. That was in the early '40s, you know--'42, '43, '44. At that time, we didn't have Wilson Tunnel so they had to come through Nuuanu Pali, all the way every evening, 5:30; practice till 8 o'clock and they had to drive back home. I guess when they hear that eh, certain team get pretty good material and get chance (to be) champ, they come. (We got) participants from all over, a lot of guys used to come. You know, you don't have to reside within Kam IV area. If they want to play, we let them play.

MK: And those days, what was your position?

T0: You mean, as far as on the team?

MK: Yeah.

T0: Well, I think I was the oldest, (and) since I been playing for almost five years, I used to be the back--fullback. In those days, different from now where you have what they call a wide receiver or running back. In those days, (it) used to get halfback, quarterback, or fullback. I used to be the fullback.

Since I was the oldest, I used to be the captain of the team. The first year we played, all inexperienced boys so lot of (times I had) to grab them by the rear, move them around to where they're supposed to be in certain position. And even though I wasn't the quarterback, I call the plays. Yeah, but even at that first season, I could see the (potentials) because I know the kids are pretty tough. You know, being on the farm and working on the farm--physically, they (were tough).

So defensive-wise, we were pretty good. I know one season--I forgot

what (year it was,) we scored about 119 points, and we yielded only 6 points. So you know, defensively, we were tough. (Even if the other team scored, the most they (could) score was one touchdown. So the first year, even (though) inexperienced, I could see that at least (we could) stand (our) ground against most of the teams. Because (the league weight is) limited to 130 pounds, (every team had) an even chance. Of course, there was some (players) that (normally) weighed about 150--they (would) just starve to make that weight. Yeah. Some of them, you know, they hit about 150 average, but just so that they can play on the team, they used to starve.

MK: How strict were you folks with the weight limit?

T0: Oh, if you don't hit the (130 pounds before game time the officials will) give you chance to sweat it out and come back. If you don't hit on the second try, you cannot play in the game.

MK: So before every game, you weighed in?

T0: Yeah. Every game. They got the scale right there. Before the game start, you get on the scale. If you don't hit 130 pounds, you have to sweat it out or sit out. So a lot of them used to sweat, try to make it on second try. Those who normal(ly) weighs (about) 150--they used to start starving from about Thursday. Drink water or juice and then, little food. So today, if you see them walking on the street, you think how they ever did hit 130 pounds.

(Everyone tried hard to be on the team and be able to play on a) championship team. Anything to play on one championship team. You know, you can play any sport--you can be a good player, but if you don't get on one championship team, (one cannot attain the satisfaction that comes from knowing you have reached your goal). You can be (even) a third stringer on a championship team, it just give that exhilarating feeling, that gee, at least you attained what (you trained hard for).

MK: How about the Kam IV Road communities--what was their feeling, attitude toward this team?

T0: Well, that's one of the best things that could (have) happened; 'cause back in old days, (boys) only stay on the bridge. They didn't know what to do 'cause there weren't any activities which they can participate in. Now, with the coming of the football and baseball team, everybody start(ed to participate and community became much involved).

Now the parents, since the team start winning championship, they in turn got interested. Before we used to walk on the street, (the girls) used to just face away (and) walk across the road. Not that (they hated the boys,) but (they did not) socialize. (The girls) just try to keep away so that (they won't) get teased that you like

her or she like you. So as far as relation (among) boys and girls, wasn't that warm. But as the team sport program start(ed, the whole community--[including girls]--was aroused with anticipation).

The girls, the families, the parents, everybody start(ed to seek ways to contribute towards the sports program. When the team sold) Japanese show ticket; they [i.e., community] (would) go out and sell for the team. We start(ed) selling laulau to raise money for equipment(s), everybody (came to) help make the laulaus. (The girls began to come involved and assisted in many projects; like one year the team put on a) Bon dance, they start helping to prepare the food to sell at the booth(s). (So) you can see that gradually they all combine together and become interwoven (as one close group of youngsters. The whole Kam IV community begin contribute in every manner, giving their full support to attain the league championship.)

(All this events brought a different social behavior among the youths.) I can say a social revolution (occurred from a period when girl/boy didn't talk, to working together cooperatively.) Now, here they (are all working hand in hand) helping the team.

When we (played at the) stadium, the whole community (were there. The attendance at these games were about 2,000, which is certainly surprising when it was only a barefoot football game. The number of people in the valley was a few hundred, so to attract a couple of thousands fans was certainly an eye opener. Capturing the championship continuously must have built up a lot of team backers. The girls became cheerleaders, and parents with the whole family were in the stands.)

(Yes, starting as a team in a small novice league and step by step we climb the ladder and reach the top. The boys/girls and the whole community work for a goal and finally win a championship. Once you attain the objective through everyone's efforts, we all became immersed in happiness.) Once you go for a certain thing and attain (it), it gives you the (satisfaction of) saying, (even though it's a small accomplishment, it is) happiness (nevertheless).

So from there on, [social revolution]. (A member of the) Sato family---intermarriage, (the others did not look on it too favorably; but she turned out to be a fine wife and a wonder mother and helped to) open up all these other avenues for the rest to follow. (They have raised a truly fine family and have enjoyed more than fifty years of happy marriage. This melting away of the cold boy/girl relation, found boys dating their next-door girls, which resulted in neighbor marrying neighbors and many families becoming related through marriage. These social changes came about because of the sports program, which brought much goodness and rewards.)

MK: I remembered early, when you were talking about sports, you mentioned like Pluto Arakaki--those days, people were close and had nicknames, right? For each other? What was some of the nicknames and how did

they get them?

T0: I don't know how they (got them)--lot(s) of them, I don't know what's the reason or how they formed. Maybe Pluto himself remind(s) of the cartoon Pluto or something. And here you call him Pluto, he accept(ed). He don't feel hurt or insulted or anything. See, everyone's like that.

Now let's say, this guy Mullet Arakaki--I don't know how he got his name. Some of them like Kosaburo, they don't say Kosaburo--they tell "Sub." At least you have some correspondence with their name, but like Mullet, his name Takemitsu. There's no sound similarity or anything but call him Mullet. I don't know--he might be illusive or something so he (was) name(d). And the brother name is Rabbit, his Japanese name is Takezo. Might be his ears stood (up) or something.

Oh, we got all kind of nickname. We get Donkey, Ajaba, Pluto, Apa, you have a whole list. In fact some of them we don't know their first name, even to this day. We never heard (their) first name. I mean like I'm older and they (are) little younger. Now I didn't go to school with them so I never heard their Japanese or (English name) mentioned. So only when they come out and they call them by their nickname, that's all I know.

So if I meet them today, I have to mention their surname 'cause I don't want to (use their nickname when) the wife (is) around. I mean if the wife was a Kam IV girl, yeah, all right. She accept 'cause she know everybody call him by that name. But if he happen to marry to somebody out of the valley and I meeting her for the first time, I address him by the surname and not (use his) nickname. 'Cause, boy, some of the names are really insulting, I think.

MK: What was your nickname?

T0: They didn't label me. I guess I'm the older one, so they didn't label me. But I go as Toki, my name is Tokio. But I just leave out the "O." And a lot of them, that's how they know my name as. You know, "Toki." Japanese [word for] "time," eh? "O" is "otoko," eh?

MK: And then, like you mentioned earlier that Mr. Sato had the first interracial marriage, yeah? And then, I know as people went off to war and came back, some of them brought home brides. Wasn't the . . .

T0: Yeah, yeah. One of our boys brought back. He went to Europe and brought back from Europe, one war bride. When he (came back he) was one of the first ones (to do so). So they had a picture of him and the bride in the newspaper and all the write-up. Those two are still together, and they (have a) good family--kids are really in good positions. So you cannot say that this type and this type is not going to work out. If she's all right and he's all right,

they'll form a real good union (in marriage).

MK: And those days--say up to the wartime, were some families still arranging marriages?

TO: Yeah. But you know, during the war, I don't know why but if the son were in the classifi(cation) where they gonna be drafted, (the parents would) start making (marriage) arrangement(s for their sons). So some of them got married and the men went off to war (while) the wife stayed back. I guess that's Japanese style, too, eh? Back in Japan, that's what they do.

MK: And then, I know you got married in 1945, yeah? What's your wife's name?

TO: My wife's name is Aka.

MK: And how did you meet her?

TO: Well, when I used to have the market at Nuuanu, she used to pass by, going home. And I guess my dad knew the family. So she used to drop by. But I don't know, somehow started working out that way. Well, previous to that, I never dated wahines, you know. Just like I was telling you. I couldn't afford to date any girls, 'cause whatever (I) earned went to support the rest of the family. Plus I (didn't) have (a) car, so I used to wait around if somebody go to town or go dance, [and] I used to hop in and go. There's no way I (could) date any wahines 'cause I (didn't) have (a car) to pick her up. Poor me, yeah?

MK: Oh (laughs), real different from now days?

TO: Yeah.

MK: You know, I'm going to end the interview here, and then next time we're gonna continue with this, yeah? I want to thank you today.

TO: Okay. All right.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 11-15-2-83

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Tokio Okudara (TO)

December 29, 1983

Manoa, Oahu

BY: Michiko Kodama (MK)

MK: This is an interview with Mr. Tokio Okudara at Manoa, Oahu, on December 19, 1983.

During our last interview we talked about the World War II period, yeah? And today, we are going to continue from after the war period. So can you first tell me about the Service Market that you started?

TO: Actually, the market was my dad's operation, and I used to go and help. I was chiefly working on the farm; running the farm nearly by myself with the help of my mother (during the war years. Then) the war ended and the (Nuuanu) area was up for urban redevelopment. Hosoi Mortuary and Pang's Clinic Building, I think (were planned for that area,) so we decided to (discontinue) the business rather than (be in competition with the supermarkets. We) felt that we wouldn't be able to compete with those chain stores. That made me decide to seek other employment.

So I went to Hawaii Meat Company and I worked for Hawaii Meat Company for about a year. In the meantime, Mr. [Akira] Sakima, who was selling the carcasses at Island Pork Producers, decided to go into wholesale cuts business. So he called me to see if I'd be interested in running the cuts department. So (after much thought, I decided to accept the position and run the wholesale cuts business. I saw the prospects for business growth much better and a possibility in increased compensation at the co-op. Lacking in seniority at Hawaii Meat, I saw the chance of promotion would take too long there, [and this] prompted me to accept the position at Island Pork Producers.)

MK: And that Island Pork Producer's Co-op, you joined in 1957, right? Can you explain how the Island Pork Producer's Co-op operated?

TO: Right, the Co-op was started in 1953 as a purchasing organization. They purchased (farm) supplies and feed and (other) [items] the farmers need. Through cooperative buying they felt that they

could get a better price and (pass the savings in purchasing cost to the Co-op members. Later the association went into the marketing of members' hogs, which became its principal operation. At the beginning, (marketing) was strictly sold as a live hog, on the hoof. (The association was able to enroll the majority of the hog raisers on Oahu as members of the Co-op.)

The cooperative differs slightly from a corporation. The cooperative has the one-member, one-vote concept. Whether you're big one or small one in operation, your voting power is equal because it's one for one. So in that way the small ones would (have equal protection marketing-wise.)

(Then) the years went by and the supermarkets chain start(ed to buy) cuts other than carcass(es) because if you buy carcass you have the problem of (disposing) all the leftover cuts. They (would) buy only those cuts which they can sell and turn over fast. That's why the organization felt that they had to convert the operation to fit the trend of marketing. (Thus the association encountered the problem of utilizing leftover cuts from the carcasses. The supermarkets' problem was passed on to the Co-op.) So that's why (we) went into processing of by-products, (the manufacturing of) laulau, char siu, roast pork, kalua--(which) would take care of the leftover cuts. So when (we went into the manufacturing of by-products,) we had to seek (larger) facilities to handle all of this added operation. That's why (we) went down to Sand Island.

(As the war ended and with Hawaii becoming a state, economic explosion occurred on Oahu. Housing and urban developments began to push the boundaries of the city on all sides. What was considered rural area like Koko Head, Blowhole and Kalihi Valley saw housing developments next to their "fences." This resulted in the Hawaii Housing Authority's decision to condemn the open area of the Valley and put it into better use by building the Kalihi Valley Homes.)

MK: That was about 1948 that they started the eviction process, right?

T0: Yeah, notice was received about that time.

MK: And about that time, your family stopped hog farming--could you explain what happened?

T0: (Each family had to decide whether to relocate the farm to rural area or give up farming, or seek employment in other fields. Many decided to move to Waianae and the Blowhole area. With the Housing in the Valley, the whole area was prohibited from the raising of hogs. An eviction time was set to clear the area by the farmers and construction to begin on the specified date.)

(I decided to discontinue farming and go to work for Hawaii Meat Company.) I remained there [in the valley] until the Campbell

Estate decide whether to develop the (area. My intention was to develop the place into a residential site with my brother-in-law, who was a building contractor. Since the Estate made no decision after a long period, I decided to move.) In the meantime, in the area below Tripler Hospital, (a) subdivision was coming up and I knew the son of the developer, so he told me to go and see if I would be interested in picking out (a) lot. (I went and saw a lot to my liking, so I finally decided to move out of dear Kam IV Road, which had been my home for twenty-five years.)

MK: And, you know, you mentioned that when the State decided to build Kalihi Valley Housing, a lot of the hog farmers had to move out to other areas, yeah? About how many families were affected?

TO: Oh, see the housing area started just above that Kam IV bridge and extended over half a mile up. (This is the area that would be for the Housing only, I) believe about thirty-five, close to forty families (were) affected. (The total families in the Kam IV community was about ninety.)

MK: What were your feelings about Kalihi Valley Housing coming into that area?

TO: Well, as far as I can see, I could see the encroachment of the city and Kalihi Valley. To have a hog raising area there was not conducive to the climate and all that other things, 'cause it's such a nice valley. I can see where way back in the '20s, being so far away from town, (it was all right then to do hog raising in that area. But after the war and the beginning of the) housing boom, most of the people felt that eventually they'd have to get out, so (it was a) matter of time. Then with the eviction notice, (there was no alternative but to make preparation to get out.)

MK: Then about 1961 the Wilson Tunnel opened up, yeah? How did that Wilson Tunnel affect that area? By that time you were out, right?

TO: Right. Oh, 1961--I'm not sure whether the housing was up at that time or what. No, but the thing is about that eviction notice, you know, this is my feeling and several others. We would have felt better if they had a hearing at a school or some other places which the whole people of that valley could have met and then heard from the authorities (to explain) this is what (they are going to do,) and why they're gonna do it. I don't remember any hearing or any assembly to (explain the reason and the steps to be taken to build the Housing. [The government should have] asked the farmers and others if the eviction date is too short or assistance would be needed from the Housing Authority. It was similar to the West Coast eviction of the Japanese after Pearl Harbor. Kicked out by an agency of the State, without any concern for the hardship that comes with eviction.)

But despite all that, we didn't have any protest. It's not like Kalama Valley. (At Kalama Valley the farmers) with the pigs said, "You folks gotta go find for me a site to relocate. It's (your) folks' responsibility if you gonna evict me." But the people (of the Kam IV Road) just obeyed whatever order came through. They just worked day and night (carrying) on their daily work, at the same time going to the country and start construction there to relocate.

MK: And you know, what happened to the families? Did they manage okay? You know, according to what you know--what happened to the families who had to relocate?

TO: Well, it's a matter of you had to do it. You get sore back or anything you just have to bear all that to try and get out in time. You know, I know this guy who used to stay in Koko Head--even had assistance (by Kaiser to have usage of) a trailer to relocate all his animals to Waianae. But (at) Kalihi Valley, none of that assistance was rendered by the authorities. (Because no protest occurred), they assume that we gonna follow the instructions and get out of there quietly.

(Despite the cruel treatment and hardship the valley people experienced, it had) its rewards, 'cause most of them who went out to Waianae or relocate to some other area and bought the land. The value of the land from that time on appreciated so much, (we have seen most persons' net worth grow enormously.) So I guess they are happy right now, even though they went through a year or year and half of real rough times.

MK: And you know, going back to your--when you moved to Moanalua, and your children, you have three boys and two girls--they all went to Farrington. What were your feelings about your children growing up--growing up and being educated at Kalihi schools?

TO: Well, as far as the educational aspect, Kaewai was a real new school, constructed just before they started school. And the teachers there was well-trained and pretty good. One year I was the PTA [Parent-Teacher Association] president there, and while conversing with them and seeing what they're doing, I felt they were doing a good job. Then they went to Dole, and I think Mr. Takenaka was the principal. So if you get Takenaka, you know he get pretty well control, who would discipline kids. Then after that they went to Farrington. I don't know who was the principal at Farrington, but they turn out pretty good. My Jon used to be pretty active in YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association], then my two daughters, Mona and Susan--they (are) always ribbing me, "How come the father no say nothing and quiet," but the two daughters at least they came to be cheerleaders and all that.

MK: And did your children also attend Japanese-language schools in Kalihi?

T0: The two girls, we try to see if we can get them to pick up at least a bit of Japanese culture or Japanese language. They (tried) but with the rest of their friends not attending, they just went through the motion. And their mother used to try and get them to (learn) odori (Japanese dance). They try a little while, but they give up (because most of their friends were involved in other activities and odori was so dull.)

MK: You know, like you lived in Kalihi for a long time so I was wondering if you could just think what were the major physical changes in Kalihi that you've noticed in the places that you lived?

T0: Well, in the early '20s, especially Kam IV Road, was what you call a road, a real country road. Narrow, one lane, rough, a lot of potholes. But because they didn't have that heavy traffic, I think (it was sufficient for those days). Then later on it was widened up. Eventually, (with) the housing there, the whole district was improved with sidewalks and the street was widened. But then, previous to the improvement of the community, most of the housings were (mostly, what one would call) shacks. We were able to live in that condition because the area was considered more or less wild. After the district improvements came in, people start putting up better homes, and (with) the nice school there, and the playground, children activities really picked up. But as far as climate-wise, I think Kalihi, like Nuuanu and Manoa, being cool--really was comfortable.

MK: And how about the people, the changes you've noticed in the population of that area?

T0: Well, up to 1940s, most of the families which were there from the '20s were still around, and was predominately Japanese. Other nationality like Chinese or Hawaiians just blend in with the Japanese and the ones who were living there. So the community was really close. Kalihi Valley, geographically, can be considered isolated, 'cause you have the stream on one side and the mountain in the back. And with the one road just leading up into the valley, just like going through the front door and come out through the front door, so you get to know everybody, and what their names are, and you even find out whatever gossip or whatever activity goes on in the community.

With everybody sharing whatever, banana or abundant of eggplant or mustard cabbage, or anything extra, we just give out to the next neighbors. So, as far as purchasing vegetables and all those things which was abundant in the valley, nobody bought. (We felt strange paying for these things we used to receive free and in abundance.)

Somehow with the increase in the young ones and the sport program, the community became much closer through concerted efforts, trying to raise money for the team; and the girls (got) involved in trying

to help (the teams). The issei, the older folks, (began to realize the many benefits and good the sports program brought to the community). They in turn became rabid boosters of the team.

Because of this movement, I (saw) the different social changes between boy and girl, (also) the [changes in] feeling and thinking of the older folks. Eventually, they (began to accept the western styles and American ways, instead for being strictly Japanese culture. They began to realize that all these different ways are the lifestyle of Hawaii and of America, which is for their children.) That really (helped) the whole movement of the younger folks. (Boys and girls began to date, marriages among different races was welcome. The social changes that occurred brought harmony, that brought about more quality to life.)

MK: And like, you know, you live in Moanalua now, when you compare Moanalua with Kalihi, what do you see as the biggest difference?

TO: Well, (in) the modern age, (the) neighbors somehow, they (are) not that close because of the nature of trying to earn a living. You get up in the morning, you go to work, and you spend most of the day at work if you have that kind of employment which takes you away from home for a long period. You come home when it's almost dark. So you don't mingle or get to socialize with the neighborhood itself. (My work requires long hours six days a week and would not permit me to participate in community activities and restricts my involvements with the neighborhood.)

MK: And you know, when you think about your life in Kalihi, what do you treasure most about life in Kalihi?

TO; (Most of my life have been spent in the Valley from early 1920s to the 1950s. I have gone through the) depression years and we (saw), even at that young age, the hard times (that) existed at that time because that's all you hear. At home, or in the neighborhood, you know this and this, it's pretty hard, and all that kind of stories. So it give you a feeling of, gee, if I grow up, do you think I should get married. You question yourself whether you have the ability to get married and support your own family, 'cause you can see the parents getting (a) pretty rough time, and you question whether it is worth it to get married and raise a family.

But yet, at the same time when I go back and try to recall all the other incidents, I feel that after all, when you go through those kinds of periods, somehow (it) hardens you up, (to assure you) that you will be able to encounter most of the problems as they come along. You know, compared to those years and now, (the) problem isn't that great. So in a way, most of (us) feel thankful that (we) went through that period. (Times were bad, but it was not a disaster.)

(I know some families that lived near Kalihi Stream, during heavy

rainy seasons found their houses washed down the stream and others inundated with water. Even with this double tragedies, these families were able to recover. This boosted our courage to face all hard times we may encounter in the future.)

(Yet at the same time with) the environment in the valley and the neighbors being so (friendly and) close, I felt life was actually a pleasant existence in spite of the economical hard times. (We) develop lasting friendship even to this day. We just long for the day when we (could) meet each other again. That's why, (we all long to reunite and have pleasant times reliving the memories.) Every time (we) meet at the funeral services or (other) kind of event where everyone come together, everybody start asking, "Gee, we haven't been seeing each other for thirty years, thirty-five years, when (are) we gonna get together again?"

(Everyone wished hopefully someone would take the first step to get a reunion on its way. Each felt the other would turn on the switch to lay plans for a get-together. So) one night I called Akira [Sakima], but he wasn't home. So I talk to the son-in-law. I told him, "Hey, Fred, tell your father-in-law to call me." The next day Akira called. I told Akira, "Hey, we better start working on getting some kind (of plan for a) reunion."

He (said), "Okay."

At first we were not too sure if we should take it upon ourselves to get this project going. (We) decided that since nobody else (was taking) the initiative, (we would take the liberty to be chairpersons for the event.)

I called about eight other boys, and we met at our house and we told them to get a reunion, we are the ones that have to undertake and do most of the job. I assigned each one ten families and that person in turn called each of the ten families to tell one of the oldest in the family to call all his sons, brothers, sisters, cousins, whatnot, who used to live in the valley, and find out who (will be attending the reunion.) I wanted the names of each one who's going to attend. He in turn would be responsible to collect the (party fee). I think we charged ten dollars for the evening. (That's how we got in touch with everybody--[almost 500 people].

MK: So when was your first reunion?

T0: In '82. Yeah. (May 13, 1982.)

MK: And so your next one is when?

T0: This 1984. Well, at the '82 reunion we felt that we (would) make another one five years later, but when I start bumping into (a lot of fellows), they said they couldn't wait that (long and we got to have one sooner). You know, within a period of three months,

three persons passed away. (Most of us are in the sixties and times are getting short.)

(When the decision was made to have another reunion, I began to gather photos of football and baseball teams, group pictures of the 1930 and 1940. Newspaper clippings of articles of our teams that was posted on a bulletin board to be seen that night. Then I drew a map of whole Kam IV community, showing every house and the names of the families that resided there. I thought it would help to recollect the days of the past and recite to their children and grandchildren the history that was spent in the valley. I also made sure the landmark of the community, "the Kam IV bridge and the Barn" were prominently drawn on the map.)

(The caterer was asked to prepare enough food to feed 400, but shockingly, close to 500 showed up. Fortunately, a former resident of the valley, who farms at Waianae, donated a large size kalua pig that helped to feed the added people. Also, benches ran out, but luckily the drinkers remained standing and talked stories all night, without eating.) I think that could have been the reason why the food was able to stretch that much.

MK: For your next one in March, how has the reception been?

T0: Well, they (are) just eagerly waiting. (Some) of them reside on the Mainland, so they want to have ample notice so they can make arrangement for vacation to come.

MK: So your place, the people really felt close to each other? They have a special feeling for those days?

T0: (Yes, living as a closely knit neighbors, working in concert to achieve success in sports and other community undertakings, found the valley people living as a "ohana." The eviction forcefully separated "the family" and left everyone deeply saddened. In order to perpetuate the memories of those days, a book about the history of the valley was suggested by Bill Tokuda. He got the idea from the organization that he belongs to. A good idea, but the question of who is going to write it? Again, Billy came out and said he would call Ruth Adaniya, who helped in writing the Uchinanchu book. So that very night he called, and Ruth being so nice, said, "Okay, I help you folks." But Ruth being busy with her school work and editing the United Okinawan Association newsletters, coupled with a goodwill tour by the Association to Okinawa, could not take over the task.) So she made a rough sketch of the book and when I reviewed that I thought it was a little lacking, (so I started anew to make it more presentable as a book).

(The true objective of the book was not only to write a history of the valley and its people, but also to distribute news clippings and photos of the football and baseball teams. There were two boys who had kept all these materials in albums, which many did

not bother to do. What a wonderful thing if these treasures could be distributed to everyone in a book form. None of the boys had any cameras, neither did we spend money on albums. This book would point out to the offspring of the valley people the proud history of our community. Through total community involvement, the teams were able to capture the championship in football and baseball. A good social life in the valley was fostered among the youths and the isseis.)

(The enviable record of winning five consecutive championships and going forty-five straight games without a defeat is some accomplishment. Many elderly people still marvel and look with respect on the accomplishments of the Kam IV boys. We may have seen the passing of an era--barefoot football era--but the Kalihi Valley Team's record may never be broken and remain in the pages of history.)

MK: You know, now days when you think about the future of, say, Kalihi, especially the parts that you know--what do you hope for the area and the people?

TO: Kalihi is a pretty big district. You have the district above King Street, the freeway, then you have the area below. Now I can see that Kalihi Kai--that's the lowest section of the district, a good part of this going into light industry. So a lot of them had been moving out, so eventually it's going to be something like Kakaako, where it's mostly business. (You have the prison there, and many warehouses; this will force most of the residents to move and yield their property to business zone.)

The district above School Street, especially in the Valley with such a beautiful climate is going to turn into a nice residential district. I think the housing authorities made a good move to put their housing there because I think those people who reside there should be happy. You get a nice good background, a view of the mountain, the greenery, the climate. (They now have a wide Kam IV Road feeding into Likelike Highway, which makes transportation really nice and convenient.)

(The one problem that would need immediate attention is the heavy concentration of many new arrivals, like Filipinos, Samoans and other immigrants. The schools and government agencies should initiate programs to help these new arrivals to blend in with the kama'āina and other immigrants. Because of difference in habits, lifestyle and thinkings, a clash among them could occur. Even now especially in schools, because of different behaviors, their speech and other differences from the local boys and girls, there may be bad feelings. The government and other benevolent organizations should prepare programs and projects to help these people adapt themselves to their new home.)

END OF INTERVIEW

KALIHI: Place of Transition

Vol. I

**ETHNIC STUDIES ORAL
HISTORY PROJECT**

**Social Science Research Institute
University of Hawaii at Manoa**

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